# IronWatch

Issue
07

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# ABYSSAL TIDINGS

## A Message from the Editor

Welcome back to edition number 7 (Lucky!) of the IRONWATCH fan magazine! This time around we have battle reports from Kings of War, amazing fiction for Warpath, and even a team roster biography for Dreadball! Plus, be sure not to miss the Ironwatch-exclusive competition for custom heroes, with the winners to be featured in a future issue of Ironwatch for fame and glory!

We here at the IRONWATCH are always looking for more material to present for your reading pleasure, but to do this we need your help! Email us (at winslows010@yahoo.com) or message the staff on the Mantic forums for more information on how and where you can submit your own stories, special rules, scenarios, battle reports, miniature pictures, and more! We can never have too much material, so feel free to pitch in with as little or as much content as you'd like. Every little bit helps!

Finally, I'd like to again thank all our regular readers for your constant support, and welcome our new first-time readers as well. As always, thank you for enjoying your fan-made magazine, and welcome to the Watch!

-Austin

*Please note that, while we here at* **Ironwatch** *attempt to deliver you the best products and ideas we can, we cannot guarantee the balance of any scenarios or special rules presented herein. If you find any errors, grammar mistakes, or rule imbalances, please contact us on the Mantic Forums (Look for the discussion labeled "Ironwatch Issue X Feedback") and let us know what we could do to improve your fan-produced magazine. If you are interested in writing, illustrating, or editing for our magazine, please let us know on the feedback discussion as well so you can get in on the action!*

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# UPCOMING NEWS FROM THE IRONWATCH!

## ADD SOME CHARACTER TO YOUR KOW GAMES!

### An Ironwatch Challenge/Competition

With Mantic releasing the 'Kings and Legends' supplement later this year we will all be able to add extra characters to our games, but unable to wait, we thought instead to challenge the readers of Ironwatch to create some legendary wizards and warriors of their own.

Using the Dwarf character Herneas the Hunter (p88 main KOW rulebook) as an example can you create a new Character to stride across the battlefields of Mantica creating new legends wherever they step.

We are looking for the full statistics, fairly point costed, a brief (30-50 words) biography and details of any special powers or weapons. We would also really like a photo of the figure you use for your character. This could be a Mantic or non-Mantic figure. An example of one possible character is given on the right.

Don't over power your characters but who knows, if this proves to be a popular idea we may even repeat the challenge/ competition for Warpath in a later issue of Ironwatch.

**Emyn Lockharn, Elf Scout Hero (1)**

| Unit Size | Sp | Me | Ra | De | At | Ne | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 6 | 3+ | 3+ | 4+ | 3 | 12/14 | 125 |

**Special:** Bow (Has 3 shooting attacks per turn at Piercing 1), Crushing Str: 1, Individual, Inspiring (Elf Scouts only), Nimble, Stealthy, Vanguard,

Emyn Lockharn is the Elf figure that used to come free with mantic points.

The Elf Prince, Emyn Lockharn rose to fame as the leader of the Elf Scouts of Melindlir, an Elvan stronghold in the northern forests of Galahir. Emyn is famed across the North of Mantica for his expert scouting and keeping the Elvan Realm alert to any dangers.

Get creating new characters now and we will publish full stats and pictures of all the best ones. Please submit your characters by March 20th!▪

*Special thanks to Stuart Smith for helping set up this competition!*

# A Tale of Orcs and Dwarves.

**By Chris Cousen and Stuart Smith**

Chris and I have been gaming together now for over 25 years, collecting, painting and even swapping many a figure over that time. Despite changing jobs making me move further away and family pressures meaning that we don't get to game as often as we would like, it is a rare pleasure to be savoured whenever our armies get chance to meet.

We currently live the best part of a 2 hour drive away from each other but manage to squeeze in about 3 or 4 gaming days each year.

Our current favourite rules include 'Kings of War' and 'Warpath' both of which have led to many phone calls and e-mails plotting our next armies and our next games.

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

Recently Chris drove up to my house for a day of gaming where we opted to play Kings of War using our slowly growing Orc and Dwarf armies. The small number of figures and units we have completed for these armies led to us opting to play two 600 point games. We used my rules for small battles (published in an earlier issue of Ironwatch) to help select the scenarios with the understanding that the victor of the first

| The Armies | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Dwarf Army: Stuart | | The Orc Army: Chris | |
| Dwarf King | 130 pts | Orc Krudger | 120 pts |
| 20x Dwarf Ironclads, full command | 135 pts | Orc Flagger | 30 pts |
| 10x Ironwatch, rifles | 115 pts | Healing Charm | 30 pts |
| 5x Dwarf Brockriders, with Pipes of Terror | 135 | 20x Orc Greataxes, full command | 130 pts |
| 1x Dwarf Ironbelcher | 85 | 30x Orc Axes, full command | 190 pts |
| Total | 600 pts | 5x Orc Sniffs | 50 pts |
| | | 5x Orc Sniffs | 50 pts |
| | | Total | 600 pts |

*Dwarven Battle Line, Turn 1*

*Orc Battle Line, Turn 1*

scenario would have his force boosted by being able to select one of the random cards I have designed for the game (also in an earlier issue of Ironwatch).

*Orcs entering the stone ruins, Turn 2*

The host on our gaming days usually provides lunch so I opted for the ease of baked potatoes, planned for the end of the first game. This provided much merriment when I realised that I had turned on the large oven having placed the potatoes in the small oven! We enjoyed our lunch, somewhat late part way through game 2 thanks to the microwave. I was obviously too engrossed in our games to notice which oven I was switching on.

Whilst waiting for Chris to arrive my daughters helped out by rolling for the scenario and placing the scenery on the table for me. The girls rather over did the scenery but we ended up with a 'Capture the Stone Circle' scenario with the stone circle placed in the centre of the table amidst the numerous woods and hills. We were ready to play... but I did remove a few pieces of scenery once the girls had gone to school.

*By Darren Lysenko*

**The Battle of the Stones**

Battle Report written by Chris.

**Turn 1**

As both armies approached the stones, the Orc scouts sneaked forwards to try to seize the prize early. The rest of the Orc army followed them at full speed. The sniffs facing the goat/gruff riders loosed their arrows and to everyone's surprise caused some casualties (1 D).

**Turn 2**

In response the dwarf Ironclads ran as fast as their little legs could take them, but couldn't quite reach the stone circle. The guns of the Ironwatch rang out, but caused only minor damage (1D) to the sniffs opposite, and the cannon missed the massive target of the Horde completely.

**Turn 3**

The sniffs in the stone circle charged through at the Ironclads, but the uneven ground would make their attack less effective. Their companions continued to shoot at the goat riders, again causing some damage to the hairy riders. The remainder of the Orc army advanced, but the Flagger was disappointed to realise he couldn't see the sniffs to use his Healing Charm on them (maybe he wanted to stay out of sight of the dwarf guns?). Just outside the stone circle the sniffs fought like a bunch of elves and failed to hit anything, retreating in disappointment back into the circle.

**Turn 4**

The Ironclads, no doubt expecting an easy victory, charged the hapless sniffs, who cowered behind the stones in dread anticipation. On the other side of the battlefield the Gruff riders charged the other sniffs whilst the Ironwatch shot at the Horde, inflicting minimal damage (1D). The cannon crew were too busy arguing (apparently over the correct way to cook potatoes) to shoot straight, the ball flying wide of the mark as the Orc horde jeered at them. The charge of the Ironwatch inflicted many casualties on the sniffs in the circle, but they bravely held

*Orc Sniffs attack the Dwarf Ironclads, Turn 3*

their position; the dwarves grumbling as they retreated and prepared for the inevitable counter attack. The Gruff Riders were luckier, slashing about themselves in a rain of blood and limbs they soon put the remaining sniffs to flight (8D), then, to more jeering and chicken noises, they stumbled back away from the horde.

*Orc Greataxes charge the Dwarf Ironclads, Turn 7*

**Turn 5**

The remaining sniffs in the stone circle charged the Ironwatch again, their enthusiasm due, no doubt, to the presence of the fearsome Greataxes moving up just behind them. The horde charged the Gruff riders, making chicken noises all the time, whilst the flagger slunk off round the building on the flank, using his charm to heal the wounds taken earlier by the horde. To the right of the Greataxes, Goreax spied his rival trying to hide behind the Ironclads, and bellowing a challenge, charged into the surprised Dwarf King, Amlodi. The Orcs fought hard, but a combination of tough dwarven armour and having to fight in cramped quarters (the sniffs and the horde both had a -1 penalty for being disrupted) meant that little was done in the end. (The sniffs caused 2D, the horde did 3D and Goreaxe did 1D). Amazed at their lack of success, or the dwarfs' tenacity, the Orcs shuffled backwards and prepared for the dwarven charge.

**Turn 6**

The Orc jeering and shouting stopped as the dwarves hit home with a bone crunching thud. The Ironclad's made short work of the sniffs in the stone circle (3D), the few remaining fled the field. The Ironwatch and the Gruff Riders smashed into the horde, but despite the casualties (7D) they held, just (wavering). Fortunately, the Dwarf King Amlodi, 'the Bringer of Sorrows' proved as effective as his artillery and failed to harm Goreaxe.

**Turn 7**

Despite the horde being temporally out of action, Goreaxe knew that he could still win. With a shout of "follow me lads" he charged into the Ironclad dwarves, no doubt leaving the king somewhat surprised. The Greataxes hit the front of the Ironclads whilst the flagger continued his lone mission round the

*By "Dusty"*

side of the building, pausing only to use his healing charm again to assist the horde. The combined attack on the Ironclads was sufficient to drive them away, despite the king's desperate pleas to them to stay. The Greataxes then turned to face the flank of the Ironwatch.

**Turn 8**

Despite the threat of the Greataxes, the Ironwatch joined the Gruff Riders in charging the horde. The king chanced his hammer against Goreaxe again, while the cannon crew were delighted to see the flagger in their sights, but once again failed to hit either the flagger or the door of the barn behind him. The Ironwatch proved ineffective, but the Gruff Riders were able to slay some of the horde (2D). Perhaps confused after their last melee, the horde began to shuffle backwards (double 6 nerve test), but caught sight of their army's standard (reroll, double 5) and held firm. The King was able to wound Goreaxe, but he just shrugged it off.

**Turn 9**

The flagger's purpose became clear as he ran towards the cannon whilst the horde charged the Gruff Riders and the Greataxes hit the flank of the Ironwatch. Annoyed by the dwarf king's persistence, Goreaxe ran at him, axe raised. Although the flagger damaged the cannon, it's crew bravely held their positions. The horde did better, after a whirlwind of green arms and bloody axes (5D) the last few Gruff Riders galloped away. Despite being hit in the flank, the Ironwatch sustained few casualties, (1D) and held (snake eyes on the nerve test). Amlodi, the Dwarf King likewise shrugged off the damage Goraxe caused (snake eyes again).

**Turn 10**

Amlodi picked his target carefully and charged the Greataxes; the Ironwatch charged the horde, while the cannon crew nervously hefted their ramrods. Despite the king killing a few of the Greataxes (2D), they held firm. The fight seemed to have gone out of the rest of the dwarves, and they failed to do anything worthwhile.

**Turn 11**

Seizing the initiative the flagger slew one of the cannon crew, the rest fled. Both the Greataxes and the horde slammed into the Ironwatch. Despite causing little actual damage (1D) it was enough to break the dwarves who tripped over their beards in their haste to escape. Goreaxe once more wounded the King, but, no doubt distracted by the Orcs victory cheers, he failed to stop the Amlodi escaping. No doubt he would be back, but for now victory, and the stone circle, belonged to the Orcs.

**The Dwarves Strike Back!**

Battle report written by Stuart.

Young King Amlodi, infuriated by his losses at the stone circle hastily assembled a new Dwarven assault force. Dragging a new cannon and crew along with them Amlodi sent a unit of Brock Riders (that look like goats and answer to the name of Gruff's) to scout out the Orc position.

Having found where the victorious Orc's were partying Amlodi sent his Gruff's on a flanking manoeuvre little realising that the Orc's had likewise split their forces. With the Orc's busy guzzling whatever foul brew it is that they enjoy and singing rude songs the Dwarves had plenty of time to deploy in a good position allowing them a better field of fire than in the previous battle and then...the

*Game 2 Battle Lines*

*The Orcs and their Krudger move forward*

Orc's spotted the threat.

Once again, the Orcs still led by Thudger the Krudger swarmed forward. Rather over confidently as they were hit (at long last) by a good shot from the dwarf cannon (a roll of 6).

Thankfully for the Dwarves, their Gruff's arrived (at the start of turn 2). Another good cannon shot (another 6) added to the Orcs damage causing them to waver and the Gruff's soon charged across the battlefield hitting them in the flanks (I didn't have enough dice for that attack, I had to throw two handfuls of dice).

This left Thudger and his pesky Flagger on their own apart from their relief force, which had by now arrived. The Dwarves turned their attention onto this new threat. Another good cannon shot (a 5 this time) and an excellent round of rifle fire from the Ironwatch Dwarves soon discouraged that threat which rather rapidly melted away. At this point the Dwarf King was seen to dance his happy dance!

With the final turn looming the Dwarven King, Amlodi led his Ironclads in a charge on Thrudger and his Flagger who after a brief melee turned tail and fled .

*Dwarven Gruffs prepare to charge the Orc flank*

With the Orc force thoroughly routed King Amlodi led his troops home hoping that by now his baked potato was finally cooked? It was a much longer way home for Thrudger!

*The Dwarves rout the Orc commander*

**Conclusion**

So a very good day, the four hours' drive was easily worth it for the two great games we got in. As Stuart has written the introduction I get to finish off with a conclusion, so here goes.

Firstly both games were played in a great spirit of friendly competition. We were both willing to point out rules that helped our opponents (although both of us forgot that the dwarf cannon had 'grapeshot' when my Orc flagger was standing right in front of it!) The dwarf army seemed balanced, though after the first battle we both agreed the cannon was a waste of points; yet it proved its worth in the more open killing fields of the second battle. I was generally pleased with my Orcs, the sniffs did what they do best, dying to protect the main units and holding up the enemy ready for charges from the horde. However, trying to be clever in the second game stopped me doing this. If both units of sniffs had been in front of the horde it would have been shielded from the dwarf missiles; wouldn't have

*By Darren Lysenko*

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

been wavered, and so would have been able to turn to face the Gruff Riders. As it was, my divided army failed to support itself and was easily torn to pieces by the dwarves. Some Gore Riders would help, but the rest of the army works well, so I don't know what I would drop to make room. There's been quite a bit of talk on the forums about banners and musicians. There were several instances where my banners saved my units, and on at least two occasions I routed dwarves by one point thanks to a musician and the lack of Dwarven command. Definitely 25 points per unit well spent in my opinion.

600 points gave us enough for the battles to be interesting without them taking ages. I was surprised at how fast the second battle was, less than an hour in total. More open terrain probably helped, though it probably led to my downfall as well. Since I set up the terrain I can't blame anyone else.

What's next? Well I hope we will get another gaming day in around Easter. Probably 600pts again to try and fit two games in. I will be using my Orcs again, as Goreaxe the Thrudger flees out of dwarven lands he may well head into elven territory and he's sure to collect a band of troops around him as he goes. If only we had more time or more opportunity I would suggest a small game followed by a larger battle, but I suspect that will have to wait until we are both retired. ▪

# Journey of the Weedy Elves

**By Jason Flint**

Here follows my ramblings about a tournament I ran with my club, the Carterton and West Oxon Wargamers, alongside Total Wargamer. I hope it will inspire you to take part in these tournaments if you do not do so already, or maybe even give you some ideas to run your own if nothing seems to be happening locally. Or at least entertain you while you read these hallowed pages.

The Kings of War game has steadily increased in popularity at our club, to the stage where it is played every night. With this I felt like it deserved an event. We often run events for other game systems so it seemed Kings of War needed something too. A simple tournament was decided as the best thing to do, nice and simple and a good way to get a few games in the day against different armies and opponents.

Luckily the KoW rulebook contains a guide to doing tournaments, so deciding how it should function was easy enough. Most of the rules remained unchanged. So the rules were sorted easily. Next a venue, our club

*Elf Spearmen hold the line against a fresh unit of Knights in Game 1*

has a partnership with a store in Evesham called 'Total Wargamer' which love putting on events as much as we enjoy taking part in them! So it seemed an easy choice to hold it here! Finally we wanted to see other gamers with their own armies, so we threw it open to everyone. Advertising it on FB and Mantic's own forum. I honestly didn't expect much of a response. An unknown club putting on a very small tournament for a game system that still doesn't seem to get as much love as other games. But what a response we got, in the first night we were getting enquiries!

The run up to the tournament saw a lot of play-testing as players tried out an army that would be suitable to take on anything that they would face. It also saw a lot of painting and worn out brushes with the promise of a lot of cameras! After a few games I went with 2 Regiments of Spearmen with banners, Palace Guard Regiment with banner, A Bowmen Horde with the jar of 4 winds, 4 scout Troops, 4 Bolt Throwers, and an Army Standard with a Healing Charm. While I cringed at the lack of 'Zap' in the army, I hoped the torrent of arrows being brought on my opponent from turn 1 (thanks to the scouts vanguarding and the bowmen's extra range) and 3 solid units of combat troops to meet whatever was thrown at me head on, that I had a good chance against all.

Competing on the day were 2 Dwarf players, 2 Elves including myself, 2 Undead, 1 Twilight Kin and 1 Men. Pathfinder Chris showed up and took charge of organizing the games and scores, as well as bringing some support from Mantic.

**Game I**

My first game was against the men and to my horror it consisted of 50 knights, 20 handgunners, 2 cannons and supporting characters. The battleground had a large ruin on the left, a rocky hill just outside my deployment and trees on my right, while Orc huts and trees offered some obscurity to my opponent. I set up very defensively in a typical formation, hiding some combat units behind the ruins. I then vanguarded cautiously and fired everything I had to try break a unit at a time and stop the cannons. The men's long inspiring range kept them in check until their units were utterly depleted. Despite breaking a couple of regiments of knights early on, and my center proving a formidable lane of death, they still made contact and smashed into my

*More Knightly trouble in Game 1*

right flank. Luckily a unit of Spearmen on a rocky hill managed to hold up an undamaged unit of knights that hit my lines, the phalanx and rocky ground blunting their charge. When the dust settled I was ahead by barely 200 points, a draw.

**Game II**

Game Two saw me against one of the Dwarf players. His army had 3 cannons, an Organ gun, a horde of handgunners, 2 troops of crossbows, a unit of Iron clad backed up by 2 shield breakers, supported by a very Elf-hating King. The battlefield offered a lot of buildings and a hill on my left but little else, while the Dwarves had a hill in the middle. I set up 2 bolt throwers on the hill to the left, spears and scouts on the right and everything else packed out the center to get some obscurity from the dreaded Dwarven artillery. I vanguarded up to the buildings in the middle, carefully placing the unit champions so they were able to see their targets while concealing them from some of the firepower arrayed against them. Arrows and Bolts rained down on his warmachines as I knew the damage they could do was intense. Luckily his hits didn't cause enough damage to break my units, though an effort to hit his lines with Palace Guard backfired when covering fire from the Bolt throwers missed completely, leaving an Organ Gun to

*Game 2, with the artillery-obscuring central buildings being hotly contested*

*The Spearmen charge the huge Horde of Handgunners in Game 2*

*The shambling hordes of Morgoroth the Faceless advance in Game 3*

unforgivingly remove them from play. The center went better as my spears hit the advancing dwarf shield breakers and encircled the ironclad. Though they proved to be extremely tough and the King just made them worse. However with all their artillery finally destroyed and their middle collapsing, the Dwarves only had a horde of Ironwatch and a few stragglers left on their left flank and found themselves cornered, and I claimed my first win.

**Game III**

The lead up to game three saw loads of speculation as to who would win. To my surprise I found myself as one of the 3 with the best chance of winning. And I was to play the current tournament leader, an undead army led by the Faceless one himself. A small copse of trees offered no protection from his catapults, but buildings on my right could count for something. A large wall entered the battlefield from the left, offering a choke point by a building, and a huge impassable mountain was just outside of his deployment zone. I put spears behind the wall to charge any undead that came through by the building and bolt throwers and bowmen next to the trees. I set up the rest of my spears and palace guard in the middle and bolt throwers by the buildings on the right. Scouts set up across all this, and vanguarded forward boldly to bring their arrows to bear on the skeleton horde. The first few turns saw the horde break on a hail of arrows, and my spearmen hit a skeleton Regiment on my left as they tried to pass through the gap between the wall and building, and a long fight

ensued. More skeletons and Revenants moved towards my right which were met by spears and Palace Guard. The catapults smashed a unit of scouts but were dispatched one by one by concentrating hits on them. While the faceless one went about burning and zapping, I decided to simply ignore him and concentrate on what I knew would die, or be more dead that it currently was. With every solid unit destroyed with the lose of 2 scouts and the Palace guard, only the faceless and 2 characters remained. It was another win.

**Conclusion**

With all games completed the winner was announced, and it was me! My weedy Elves had pulled it threw, much to the shock of my fellow club members who regularly enjoy "collecting weedy Elven tears". Despite my doubts about lack of speed, zap and characters, concentrating firepower and hitting damaged units with spears and greatswords worked. Twilight Kin came in second, and Dwarves third. Unfortunately my fellow Elven player managed to collect the wooden spoon, Elves managed not just the top, but also bottom of the table!

The end of the day saw prizes and banter, and everyone asking when the next one was. It was a great day and a great chance

*Spearmen and Palace Guard catch a unit of Skeletons in a chokepoint in Game 3*

*Weedy Elves Victorious!*

to play against some new opponents and see other peoples armies. If you have the chance to go to a local tournament, I urge you to do so. The easy rules of the game mean games flow quickly are there are no disagreements or lack of understanding when rules contradict each other. The atmosphere is often more laid back than competitive and its a great chance to test your army against armies you may not have the chance to face normally. If there are no local events or tournaments, and you are in a club and have a venue, just a little bit of preparation work is all you need to get one going yourself! ▪

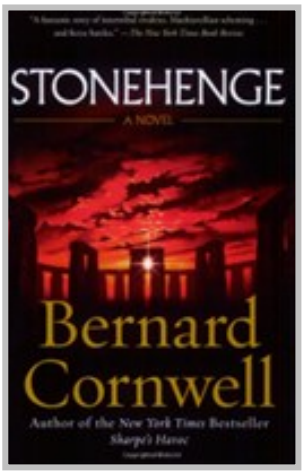
# Finding Inspiration from Historical Fiction

## By Neil Dixon

When looking for inspiration and ideas for my Kings of War battles, historical fiction has to be at the top of my list. I find reading a narrative of a battle aides me in visualising how it took place. When there is a great story and characters involved, it fires up my imagination even more.

The good thing about finding inspiration from historical battles is that you have a readymade map, objectives, victory conditions and even ideas for characters. After re-reading the description in the novel, I use other sources to get a better picture. I find reference books from the local library, websites and documentaries are useful for maps and detailed descriptions to help create my scenario. So, if you do not read historical fiction already, here are three of my top authors.

**Bernard Cornwell**

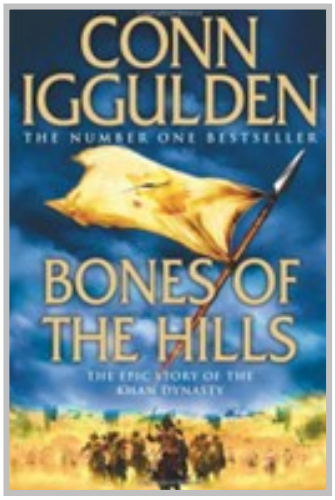



I cannot help finding ideas from Cornwell's action packed literature. As well as the celebrated Sharpe series, based in the Napoleonic era, he has written in in settings from Arthurian to the American Civil War. My favourite novel he has written has to be Stonehenge. Inside are some great ideas for

*By "imm0rtal reaper"*

*By Boris Samec*

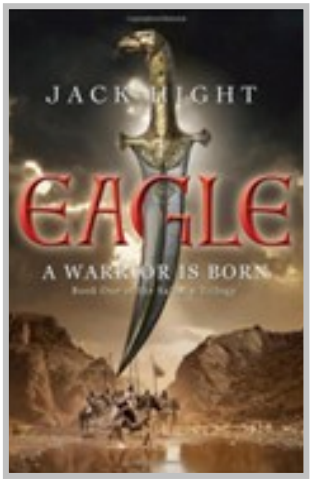
an ambush featuring troops yet to be blooded and a rescue of a fair maiden, which would both make great small scale Fantasy scenarios. There is no doubt that Cornwell also creates excellent characters, usually rogues with good intentions at heart. Thomas of Hookton in the Grail Quest series is one of my favourites. An English archer with a mysterious past, he has forgone the church and has instead taken the life of war to seek the Holy Grail. A mind set easily adaptable for any good-aligned Kings of War character.




**Conn Iggulden**

The Conqueror series describes Genghis Khan, and how he redrew the map in the thirteenth century, whilst the Emperor series focuses on the Roman Empire. Both are epic, but the latter contains back stabbing politics and ruthless power struggles, all great fictional fodder. Khan's battles in the Conqueror series are described in vivid detail, and would make excellent ideas for Kings of War scenarios. Even the tactics of the differing armies are illustrated. The Mongol horsemen were excellent at harassing the foe, feigning weakness, and drawing them to commit to an attack at a disadvantage. They would then launch headlong into an assault and annihilate them. The series would also serve as a great basis for a map campaign. In the series, Genghis sets out to first dominate other Mongolian tribes, extends his conquests to Central Asia and Eastern Europe. It would be easy to substitute the armies described in the book for Kings of War forces and you have a series of linked battles, ready to fight.

**Jack Hight**




The Saladin Trilogy is set in the Crusades the Franks launched in the holy land where they fought the Muslims. It describes how Saladin rose to power, and his ambition to retake Jerusalem. There are some great descriptions of how the Franks, who were not equipped for the heat and terrain of the Middle East, would often suffer from the unseen enemy of fatigue, hunger and thirst. Making rules for attrition would add

*By "dusty"*

some great flavour to your Kings of War campaigns and battles, and reading the novel helped me visualise the effect it would have on an army. Descriptions of sieges are also prominent, and could be used in a Kings of War context.

**Adapting Historical Battles to Create Scenarios**

Here I recreate the Battle of Mohi, described in the Conqueror series by Conn Iggulden. I first paraphrased the description of the battle, ensuring I got a picture each army objective in my mind. I then set about recreating these objectives within Kings of War, resulting in what I think is an interesting and flavourful scenario.

**The Scenario - Battle of Mohi in Kings of War**

*Captain Mikhail squinted at the river through his eyeglass. He relaxed in his saddle, chuckled to himself, and started setting up his smoking pipe. Overnight he had foiled an attempted ambush. The dawn mist had risen, and the bearded ones were now preparing for another attack. There was no way he could lose this battle he thought. His scouts reported how the half men looked tough, but his force outnumbered them nearly two to one. With his best troops defending the bridge, his main force would enjoy a leisurely breakfast of roast hog stolen from the village in which his army had fortified and made camp. If a few half men straggled over this side of the water, his rockets would see to them no problem.*

*Or so he thought…*

The historical battle involved an invading Mongol army, pursuing a Hungarian force. The Hungarians were camped at the Sajo River, believing they were facing a Mongolian army that opposed little threat. Ignorant that a significantly larger number of troops than they realised lay further afield, the Hungarians struck out, hoping the catch the Mongols by surprise at night. They caught a Mongol force crossing the bridge, ready for a dawn attack.

The Hungarians were victorious, defeating the Mongol raiding force with crossbowmen. A contingent was left guarding the bridge, whilst the remaining Hungarians retreated to their camp to celebrate their victory. The Mongols sent a force of catapults with the main force to dislodge the crossbowmen and retake the bridge. The superior Mongolian that was not scouted by the Hungarians force was sent to outflank the Hungarian army, building an additional crossing to the

south of the river.

The Hungarians were defeated at the bridge, retreated and alerted the main army of a raid. Half the force was mobilised, but were overwhelmed by the main Mongol force. Meanwhile, the second Mongol force in the south launched a counter attack in the flank, which decimated the Hungarians.

During the playtest, I fought as the attacker with my Dwarfs. Kingdom of Men substituted for the Hungarians as defenders. Any armies can be used, though you may have to modify elements of the scenario to achieve a balanced game.

**Armies & Set up**

The attacking force is 1800 points, and the defending force is 1300 points. Use a 6' x 4' table. The defender dedicates at least one unit, and approximately up to 25% of their total army points to defending the bridge. The attacker must split his force in two, dedicating approximately 50% of the total army points to attacking from the south east, and 50% attacking from the north. The main defending force sets up in the south west corner.

**Terrain**

Bridge: Wide enough for one regiment to move across at no penalty, counts as difficult terrain for hordes. The north bridge is an objective.

Woods: Count as difficult terrain.

River Sajo: Count as impassable.

Village of Mohi: Contains four houses, treated as normal buildings. Each is an objective.

Walls: Treat as obstacles.

**Setup**

Deployment Area Key

A – Set up at least one unit, or up to 25% of defending force points on or within 3" of the north bridge.

B – 50% of attacking force deploys from turn 2 onwards in the east corner in an area 24" x 12".

C – Remaining defender units set up in an area 36" x 12" in the south west corner.

D – The attacker deploys 50% of his force 8" on to the north table edge.

**Starting the Battle**

Each player rolls a dice, the lowest rolling player setting up a unit first. Each army then takes it in turns to place their units. The defender can deploy from forces A or C. The attacker only deploys force D. Force B is engaged building an additional river crossing to outflank the defending army. The force sets up at the start of turn 2.

*By Michael Defranco*

Both players roll a dice. The player with the highest chooses whether to take the first turn.

**Victory Conditions**

A. The army which has at least one unit (not individuals) within 3" of the bridge, with no enemy units within 3" of the bridge at the end of the battle scores 180 victory points.
B. Killing the most expensively pointed character in the opposing army scores victory points equivalent to the cost of the character multiplied by two. If two or more characters in one or both armies are equal points, randomise before deployment which is the target.
C. Each house counts as 180 victory points for the army which has at least one unit (not individuals) within 3", and there are no enemy units within 3" of the house at the end of the battle. A single unit can only capture one house.

The army which has most victory points at the end of the game wins.

**Game Length**

At the end of turn 6 roll a D6. On a roll of 4 or more the game continues for one more turn. ▪

*By "left64"*

# Sage advice and random musings

## Hobby chatter from a hairy old gamer.

*By Joe Ketterer*

Greetings all!

This month as we are well into the new year, I thought I'd chat about wargame shows and what goes on at them, and hopefully help make more people aware of them.

Up and down the land there is a veritable cornucopia of events both large and small for folks like us to attend, and while away a few hours by having fun, seeing the new toys available, and watching (or even playing) a game or three.

These shows are fantastic as they are almost always independent, so aren't concerned with pushing one company's toys over another. They allow us to meet and greet some of the industry's big players, as well as shop with traders we might only ever use on the internet. This is important as these smaller traders are often "sole traders," making a living doing these various shows as well as keeping a web shop.

Let's face it, there's nothing like getting your little paws on a new pack of toy soldiers, and these places really are the best for this,. They offer you the chance to see what you are getting, allowing you to see the detail fist hand rather than just viewing a picture on a web shop (And sometimes not a good picture at that). But most importantly, it offers you the option of asking questions, advice, or even if you can just open the box to have a look. On top of that you can save postage by collecting your items in person as a lot of traders are not only happy to bring

*By Jonathan Faulkes*

items prepackaged for collection but quite often they will offer "show deals" in the run up to the event to stimulate sales. What could be better than getting discounted minis on top of not having to pay postage?

Another hobby of mine is rummaging through the various "discontinued" bins and boxes you find at these shows, where for the time and trouble of picking through a huge tub of loose miniatures you can come across some rare treats or just some basic troops to bulk out your forces from a manufacture that particular trader is no longer stocking, or by a company that is no longer making that miniature.

Also worth a mention is the ever popular bring and buy stalls. Not all shows have them, but if they do you can bring along that book/ miniature/game/army that you no longer use/want, sell it. Whilst you're at it, buy somebody else's unwanted items that you just cant live without or pass up as they are so darn cheap. Do beware though if you choose to bring your items for sale; By all means research the current "going price" on the internet auction sites, but bear in mind they are often selling to the world, whereas if you want to sell your item you need to price it for the people at the show.....which will be a bit less in order to gain a sale. You just need to ask yourself if you want to take it home and have the hassle of listing it online, or sell it here to fund that new thing you really need .

But without a doubt the best thing about these shows are the games themselves, .side Plus, there are companies like Mantic who will have great stands with friendly staff (and Pathfinders!) who are willing to take you through one of their games or show you their latest releases, and there are also a multitude of local clubs putting on demonstration games where you can watch, look at the great painted miniatures, and ask questions about the game or club.

You can also find participation games, where you can try out games yourself, so it's a great way to "try before you buy" in all respects. Thinking about getting a new army? Go to a wargames show. Thinking about trying a new game? Go to a wargames show. Thinking about trying something completely different be it scale, period or genre? Then get yourself to a wargames show! The bigger ones are, of course, the best, but don't think that just because it's a small local show it's not worth attending. They are often a great place to make friends, try new things, or just have a day out and save a bit of cash on stuff you were going to buy anyhow. And in the process, you are helping stimulate the local economy and support smaller independent traders and companies.

Go on; Use your google-fu and search for "wargames shows 2013" or try one of the wargaming magazines, as they generally have adverts for them as well as an events calendar for the year.

Go on, and try something new!

In the meantime may all your dice roll high, and remember…….

The objective of the game is to win. The point of the game is to have fun. The two should never be confused.

-Bil

*By Michael Defranco*

*By Boris Samec*

# LAST OF THE BROKKYR

**By Michael Grey**

The ordnance punctured the atmosphere. Successive layers of ablative armour disintegrated under pressurised friction, protecting the payload as it blasted through exosphere, thermosphere, mesosphere, stratosphere.

It made airfall, rending the sky with a crack like thunder, leaving tracts of burning oxygen in short lived contrails. Thunderheads and clouds passed, rendered imperceptible by velocity, making way for a landscape made dark by smoke and blood.

Below, snaking down the centre of a rift valley, a line of infantry and armour clambered like ants over the wrecked landscape to reach their enemy. The scene was there for a fraction of a second before the missile, descending at ear-splitting speed, hit the ground like god's fist.

The impact killed hundreds, shredding skin with debris and burning the air in their lungs. Thousands more were thrown from their feet as the ground shook, symptomatic of a foreign object invading the body of a planet. The bomb dug. Its final layer of protection, elongated, toothed and rotating, buried down, using the massive momentum of the fall to push the ordnance further and further. The impressive inertia was brought to heel by the planet's iron-heavy crust, and the object stopped.

And exploded.

Robbed of air, sound energy altered its nature adding to the expanding wave of force outward and upward.

The mantel shook, cracked, split. Giant fissures opened on the surface. The battle above stopped as the ground opened up. The valley rolled under the death throes of a planet. And if any were in the position to pull their eyes up they would see more contrails, burning down from the sky to pound into the earth.

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Bruun fell to his knees. The earth shook,

bucking in great hiccups. Training told him to cover his head or find the nearest bolt hole, but his senses told him this was more than an artillery barrage. There were no impact reports, and it went on longer than it should.

Above the air burned with a sudden crosshatch of laser fire

Behind him, far behind, were cries. Anger and pain mixed in their curiously similar tones. Say what you would of the humans; they made the same sounds as Bruun's people when shot.

The shaking intensified, and an ancestral fear gripped him cold.

*Earthquake.*

He closed his eyes and pushed the fear down. He had his message to deliver. That was more important than grovelling in the dirt. There was no stone above his head. He was here, out in the open, and there were other things which would kill him if he did not move.

He pushed himself up, forced a step. And another.

But these sounds were too close, their position made indeterminate by battle's discord, and he had his message.

He ran, keeping low. Above the air burned with a sudden crosshatch of laser fire. Too high to be meant for him, but still he pushed his legs harder.

The sky was blinded by filthy clouds, black and purple with chemical fires. The sun was put out and he would not be able to navigate by that. But he had excellent senses with direction. All his people did. All he had to do was-

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

Something landed metres behind. Something big. The ground shook and he began to fall again, but was saved from that when whatever it was exploded. Bruun was saved by some upthrust of earth, the rock taking the brunt of the shockwave, but not enough that he was not picked up and flung like a doll.

Time slowed, the lay of the land revealed itself as he flew, allowing him in some dumb *when I land* state of mind to appreciate where he should run and where the enemy lay. And then he became aware of the cliff edge rising up to meet him. It felt like he fell through sap, the crag approaching at a leisurely pace. But he could not bring his arms forward. He would hit that cliff, and there was nothing he could do about it.

He struck it chest first. The impact blew the air from his lungs and brought time up to speed. His head struck then, his helmet saving his life as his skull thumped inside it, sending his vision and his world black.

****

His mother held out the box. It was a simple thing; a quartz oblong, half the length of his arm. Inside it was hollow and inlayed with a soft blue cloth. The blue of Brokkyr.

His mother held the lid open. He could not see the hinges. A secret of the Brokkyr craft hall, one they would not share, along with the technique for its locking. Once the lid was closed, it would never again open.

There was a finality in that thought. One which reached beyond the box itself, and

*By Boris Samec*

He could not bring his arms forward. He would hit that cliff, and there was nothing he could do about it

rubbed against his mind trying to get his attention.

Bruun looked up at his mother. Her eyes, so usually reserved for critique and disappointment, wrinkled at the corners in a way he could only assume was pride. It would only be a guess because he had only seen it when she held similar boxes, almost identical, in the same ceremony for his other brothers who had taken up arms for Brokkyr. Many of those brothers were here now. Along with his few sisters. They radiated out in a half circle from their mother. Some

were smiling at him, supportive, encouraging. Some, those for the most part wearing marshal uniform, were not. Most noticeable were those not there. It was for them, and the reason their absence, he was there now. Standing before an empty box.

He looked into it once more. It seemed deeper on the inside than its dimensions should allow. A light's trick, perhaps? Perhaps.

Should his physical body not return, he would forever remain here among the Brokkyr

The thought almost made him smile. But here, now, in this place, it was not appropriate.

What the box would contain was him. The essence of him. Once closed it would be placed in the family's vault, with his brothers, uncles and sires, reaching back through generations. And, should his physical body not return, he would forever remain here among the Brokkyr.

He had walked that vault many times before. More than was necessary, socially speaking. Rows upon rows of shelves, of boxes, of etched plaques. All looking down on him. It was comforting. More than once he found himself speaking to the boxes of his brothers who had not returned, finding solace in the thought they could hear him.

But now, looking at the box held up by his expectant mother, it looked like nothing

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

more than an empty box. And he wondered if it was meant for him, or for his family.

He looked his mother in the eye, raised his hand to his mouth, and breathed into the half formed fist. He moved his hand to just above the box and opened his fingers.

The box snapped shut with a sound like…

****

…an explosion which brought him back to consciousness. He opened his eyes. Closed them again, painful under the gun metal sky. Clouds hung low, brooding under a weight of chemical smoke, but even so it hurt to look.

He blinked tears and rolled onto his side. Pain constricted his muscles and he felt like vomiting. He choked the urge back and rose to his knees, and then his feet.

*By Boris Samec*

His message!

The sounds of battle raged. Chugging automatic fire and the sharp report of higher calibre rounds.

He checked. Still there, safe and sound.

He orientated himself, and began to move. First with hesitance; testing each footfall, fearful of twisting an ankle or worse, making his journey all the more difficult; then with alacrity. He broke into a loping jog he could keep up for days.

To his right the sounds of battle raged. Chugging automatic fire and the sharp report of higher calibre rounds. But that was it off to the north and the intervening ground muted the noise, muffling it until it held a strangely dreamlike quality. One he could ignore as he ran.

The air above him tore as two Valkyr bombers streaked towards the front. Low enough that he could see their payload doors open to drop hurt on the humans. He could have whooped and punched the air as the bomblets released and rained down.

A staccato cracking told him the munitions hit as the Valkyrs banked, turning back towards him. That was when he saw them. Three missiles, their trail of smoke and fire larger than the warheads, rose up from some unseen patch of ground to the north

and changed trajectory, making for the bombers.

A prescience made him focus on the centre missile. It swiftly outpaced the other two, reaching forward as if in eagerness. He knew what would happen before it did.

The missile caught the rearmost Valkyr almost playfully, and exploded with a licking ball of orange fire. The flyer bucked, tipped nose-first as its hind reared.

He dare not look back, putting all his focus into running

Bruun thought they were returning to rearm, but a second payload detonated in the bomber's rear, peeling the armour apart and shattering its nubbed front end free.

It was that end which quickly lost its altitude, and fell towards Bruun.

He ran. He thought he was running fast before, but now he hauled himself over the broken ground as if he had no breath of later. He dare not look back, putting all his focus into running.

He risked a swift look. The burning flyer's nose was close enough for him to read the chassis runes.

Before him the ground rose sharply, an upthrust of rock around a huge impact crater. He threw himself up, grabbed, pulled, and fell down the opposite bank as the nose crashed into the other side with a ground shaking explosion.

Alive. He was alive!

He stood on unsteady legs, and looked up to see humans staring at him.

****

Commander Huscarl Dron gave them the news. He did it as he should; levelly, with no inflection, trusting in Bruun and Dvalinn to take it as Brokkyr. Especially so now.

Dvalinn blinked. "All of them?"

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

*By Boris Samec*

Huscarl Dron nodded. "I'm afraid so, lad."

Dvalinn accepted the confirmation with a nod and shifted his stare to empty air. He was broken. It may not show on the outside, but Bruun knew his battle brother, and Dvalinn would be forever ruined.

"And what say you, lad?" Bruun had been unaware the Huscarl was looking at him, unaware he had said nothing. It was all too huge. Too numbing. What was there to say? He managed to croak, "Why?"

"Who can say? The humans, they reach for what they want, and they want everything. Brokk was just in their way. They bombarded it from orbit. There's nothing that could have been done."

"I want," began Dvalinn, then stopped, turned away, thought on this words, then looked back. "I want revenge."

Who can say? The humans, they reach for what they want, and they want everything

The Huscarl's moustache curled up in the grimmest of smiles. "You will have that chance."

****

There were three of them. Two were on the crater's floor, one propped against the opposite side. That one appeared deflated and pale, even for a human. Its bare face looked at him in a way that was too pained to care of his arrival. The next was on its knees before the first. It wore the white tabard of the human's apothecaries, with a bloodied palm print soaking the fabric. It held some kind of implement in its hands and what could have been a fearful look on its face.

The third, the last, was standing, and held one of their impossibly thin rifles.

*By Chris Schlumpberger*

His roll down the crater's side came to an end and Bruun stood, half crouched, ready to run but scared what that would prompt. He had his message. It had to get through. And he had no weapons.

The closest human, the one with the rifle, seemed as unsure as Bruun. He flicked a look back to the apothecary then back to him. A visor covered his face so Bruun could only guess at its intentions, but it had looked for authority and not raised its weapon. That spoke of fear, and fear was unpredictable.

Could he reach the human before it fired? He judged the distance. It looked too far. And if its friends decided to join in he would surely die.

The decision was made when it went to raise its rifle. Its body gave the intention away before the weapon moved, a tensing around its middle and slight squat in its thighs.

Bruun was at a dead run before the rifle barrel could come up. The human's always seemed unready for how quickly his kind could move, and this one was no exception. It panicked at his charge and fired too soon. The blasts ate the ground before Bruun's legs, kicked dirt up into his face. He ran on, ignored the stinging in his eyes and jumped.

His greater mass barrelled the human over. They fell with Bruun on its chest. The human brought its hand up in defence, the rifle now the bone of contention between them. Bruun's hands gripped the weapon on either side of the human's. It tried to force the barrel around to Bruun's face, Bruun forcing it back.

It had looked for authority and not raised its weapon. That spoke of fear, and fear was unpredictable

He heaved with all his strength, bringing his weight up and then down. The force overcame the human's muscles and the rifle dropped until the barrel was across its throat. Bruun kept pushing down, pushing and pushing. A wet grinding shook through the rifle and up his arms as the weapon choked the human. It struggled under him, kicking, its hands alternately trying to push the barrel up or reach for Bruun's face. Its

mouth was open, issuing wet gasps. Bruun did his best to ignore them. It made the human too… too like him and his own.

The life was leaching out of the human, and at the last Bruun closed his eyes and pushed harder. There was a wet crunch as the windpipe collapsed and the kicking stopped. Only then did Bruun open his eyes. And remember the other two.

They had not moved. The one lying down did not look able, but the apothecary was armed, a pistol strapped to one thigh. But it had not moved, the instrument he held before was still in its hands. When Bruun looked at them it shifted slightly, moving between him and the injured human. An oddly empathetic gesture which spoke to Bruun.

*By Boris Samec*

There was a wet crunch as the windpipe collapsed and the kicking stopped.

He could reach them before the apothecary reached his pistol, he was sure of that. Or he could use the rifle in his hands. Instead he just looked.

When he did not move the apothecary lifted one hand up, palm towards him.

That that blasted landscape of chaotic violence, Bruun saw the human's hand tremble.

He neither shook or nodded his head. He didn't know if the human would recognise either gesture. He simply stood, dropped the rifle, and left the crater.

****

Commander Huscarl Dron was dead now. His own promise of vengeance unfulfilled, cut short by anti-aircraft fire. Bruun was beside Dron in the drop craft. The violent bucking of a ship air-breaking through atmosphere suddenly took on a more serious, less predictable character, just before the aircraft split in two, severing down the middle between Bruun's seat and Huscarl Dron's. No squeal of metal, no incandescent. One moment they were together, holding onto the restraints and trying to take some of the buffeting in their arms, the next air whistled in Bruun's ears,

tugged at his hair. To one side, where Huscarl Dron and the rest of his battle brothers had been was a roiling vortex of biting night air and the hint of a shadow disappearing into the clouds.

Dvalinn was dead too. The war for the Brokkyr home worlds heaved on, taking in every patch of rocky ground in the systems and the gulfs of space between. Together Dvalinn and Bruun had seen too many battles to count. Literally, too many. Where one fight would meld into another, did you count that as one or two? However many they were, Dvalinn had been at his side.

Bruun had seen too many battles to count...Where one fight would meld into another, did you count that as one or two?

They were the last two. There was never a question it could be any other way.

Dvalinn at least had accounted for some of the humans invading their home. But what were a few dozen enemy in the face of hundreds of thousands?

It had not been the glorious death Dvalinn wanted. A night time camp. An errant sniper. Dvalinn was there; standing, talking, brooding. Dvalinn. A flash and a crack and Dvalinn fell. One shot took from the universe Bruun's last connection to his home. To who he was.

Dvalinn was gone, and then there was only him. The last of the Brokkyr.

****

He was close now. The end of his journey, where he would deliver his message.

Before him a command tower rose. Matt

*By "Skolo"*

*By Boris Samec*

dark, seeming to drink in the night. Too tall to be a bunker, its height projected ownership of the land around. This far from the front sentries were few and Bruun slipped between their cocky patrols easily, staying to shadows, squeezing between multi-wheeled vehicles, behind them all and into the tower.

The stairs were high, coming nearly to his knees. One final, mercifully small obstacle before the end.

The stairs ended in a bulkhead with a wheeled lock one might see in an old ship. It hung partly open. Bruun stepped silently through into a room ringed by windows, reflective black in the night, and dominated by a central table too high for him to see clearly, but he knew it would hold the map of Brokkyr. Around it; humans. Seven of them. Two in the long brown coats of their officers, the others in the impractical, delicate clothes of those who gave orders to the brown coats.

Bruun's lips curled into a smile, his first in… years? Yes, years.

The humans started at the clank of the heavy door closing. The surprise at seeing Bruun there, in their home, rooted them still.

This far from the front sentries were few and Bruun slipped between their cocky patrols easily

A few, the ones in the fine clothes, began to chatter in their slight language, directing whatever they said to the two commanders, pointing at him and outside. The two brown coats though did not move. They eyed him warily.

Bruun became aware he was speaking. Reciting names one after another. *Baalin, Mak, Duala, Ullua, Dram.* His brothers, his

sisters, his mother. He spoke as he pulled his gloves free, where he held his message in one palm.

*Mikala, Born, Bjorn, Grokla, Tusock.*

Molecular bonds would be encapsulated and then shattered driving the nitrogen atoms apart, releasing the primal force which keeps the universe together

The brown coats realised they were in danger now, even if they did not know its nature. Urgency overcame fear and they ran to cabinets on the walls, tugging frantically at the handles.

Bruun brought his hands to his front, before his chest, a hand span apart. One facing up, one down. In the lower palm he held his message. A regraded francium-based silica gel. Once pressed the film would break, absorbing into his flesh to react with the water in his body. Molecular bonds would be encapsulated and then shattered driving the nitrogen atoms apart, releasing the primal force which keeps the universe together. A chain reaction would follow through his body, converting the bonds into heat energy, leap frogging onto every other carbon atom for tens of kilometres around, splintering each in turn until there would be nothing but a short lived ball of pure white energy and an explosion to rival the birth of a star.

It was enough revenge for him and Dvalinn to share.

He closed his eyes.

*Gvala, Ytuck, Fala, Gron. Dvalinn.*

He opened his eyes.

*Brokkyr.*

And brought his hands together.▪

*For more stories like this, visit Michael's blog at www.michaelgrey.com.au*

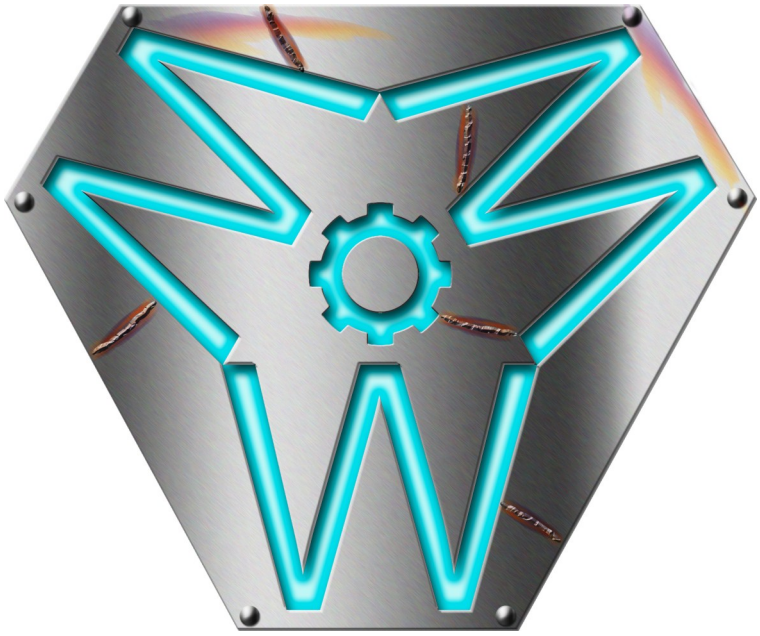
*By "skolo"*

# WELD ARE WARRIORS

## By Doug Newton-Walters

Ask anyone about the Forgefathers and they'll make some vague statement about their skill at making things. But no one, not even the Forgefathers themselves, would claim to be fashion icons. Until weldware came along. When Structor Corp hired a Forgefather construction clan to build their corporate headquarters, they never imagined what would happen. The Forgefathers, not being ones for ostentation or unnecessary expenditure, built the massive megascraper out of the offcuts of proper Forgefather technology. The exposed metal superstructure caused a stir amongst the corporation's investors and after a lengthy and expensive process, Weldware was born and soon became the name of the Corporation itself. Originally a design style for construction, it quickly spread to everything from personal comms, to jewellery and eventually clothing.

The Dreadball team sponsored by the corporation was dropped and a new, all Forgefather team was recruited. They were to be the face of Weldware, each given a game persona and an immaculately manicured appearance. The galaxy's first Forgefather fashion models had been born, each as strong as an orx and biosculpted with the best beauty-mods money can buy.



**Weldware**

Designer engineering for the discerning citizen. Sick of the sleek round post pre modern styling you see everywhere? Then get weldware, manufacturing chic. Using patented nano-oweave crystalline matrices to produce amazing industro-hue designs, and with authentic heat stressed tints, beaded joins and unique oxidisation patterns, your fixtures will be the envy of your friends and the talk of the hab.

The Weldware Warriors, or $W^3$ in all their advertising, take to the field in custom made weldware armour as part of a deliberately coordinated marketing strategy. Whether it works or not, weldware is one of the most sought after brands on the galactic market. The fans will attend games wearing their favourite player's exclusive brand chanting 'tri-dubs!' and waving their game exclusive collectable weldware torches.

Even amongst Forgefather teams the $W^3$ use their strikers very little, preferring to beat the opposing team into submission before letting their strikers take the field. This suits their marketing strategy because their strikers are invariably the most augmented models in the team and the longer they spend on the bench the more time they have to model their wares.

**Jaren 'Grok Crusher' Kharicson**

Built like an orx, Jaren is the tough man of the band and leader of the $W^3$ guard contingent. His perfectly sculpted muscles are designed for maximum appeal to the 'short muscular hairy man' attracted Corporate demographic, which is apparently the second largest despite Waifcorp's high-pitched claims. Jaren's fierce scowl sends his fans weak at the knees and his immaculately manicured beard even has its own comfort beard line, for those that need something to stroke for reassurance. No one knows what grok means, but given his propensity to crush everything within reach, most people have concluded it's Forgefather for 'whoever

gets in my way', which in dreadball is everyone on the opposing team.

**Sephir 'The Face' Wroth**

While all the W$^3$ are recruited and modified to be the best weldware models science can produce, Sephir stands out even amongst them. His face is beauty incarnate, strong chiselled features, deep soft eyes. His position as Striker gives him plenty of time to play to the crowd from the bench as the W$^3$ have contracts to model their lines even whilst playing (and as a result he continually takes off his helmet in flagrant disregard of DGB regulations). On the few occasions he actually takes to the pitch his rather obsessive fans of all genders and species scream his name with lusty enthusiasm. Rumours abound that the W$^3$ doctors have implanted nanopore sparklers in his face. It's certainly true that he seems to shine unnaturally when he smiles on the pitch, almost as if tiny stars explode into being inches from his face. Given his penchant for posing for the crowd his success on the pitch is pretty limited. However if he ever gets slammed by an opposing player a massive roar of 'Not The Face!' erupts from the crowd and has actually resulted in several opposing player casualties

from pitch invasions by enraged fans trying to protect their special man…

**'Blades'**

A narcissistic egoist of the highest order evinced by his disdain for using real names, 'Blades' (the inverted commas are part of the name) is infamous for his on-pitch dummy spits. He considers himself an artiste of unrivalled skill and many of the fans agree with him. He has his own line of ''Blades' Shades' which according to his many lady friends, he wears at all times. He and Sephir get along like fire and ice which is entertaining in its own right as they have to spend the majority of games stuck in the subs bench. Their impromptu pose battles in the bench have often rated higher than the game itself. Every action 'Blades' performs is a study in aesthetics. From his graceful running style to his leaping catches and victory poses, 'Blades' epitomises the manufactured nature of the $W^3$ team, which just makes him even more popular with fans.

**Gotik 'Slabs McKenzie'**

His background a mystery, Slabs is the gentle giant of the group. He doesn't appear overtly violent and attracts the introverts to the game (a lucratively untapped live event demographic). He gets his name from the unfortunate similarity between his body shape and the extremely popular McKenzie Corp 'slab' repro protein steak (Weldware

currently own a controlling share in McKenzie). He follows Jaren's lead in all things and has a rather unique slamming style. He runs straight at his target, arms hanging at his sides. His massive armour and dense body create a formidable battering ram and his solid W$^3$™ ridged guard helmet provides the perfect point on which to smash into his target.

**Thor Hammerson**

Every group needs its badboy and for the Warriors it's Thor. He's almost more famous for his off-pitch altercations and crazy stunts than those on-pitch, which is saying something considering his rather gory game record. A fiery temper matched by his caustic mouth, Thor is a mincing machine on the pitch. Publicly disdainful of anything Jaren says, W$^3$ has cultivated a popular rivalry between the implacable Jaren and the hot-headed Hammerson. His wildly popular nova hair style has spawned its own product range and many people use the patented creams on their own hair when going to see him play, creating a massive spiked orange hedge of screaming fans in the galleries. Hammerson has the highest foul count of all W$^3$ and will gleefully sucker punch or stomp someone when they're down. His signature

knee-capper fist strike is always preceded by the fans' shouts: "IT'S HAMMER TIME!"

**Garic 'Bossman' Smitemaster**

Unusually amongst dreadball teams, the W$^3$ captain is a Jack. Wearing number plate 1, Garic is the implacable mastermind of the team. His persona is of the aloof supergenius and his preferred position is as a sweeper in his own 3 point strike zone. From this position he can survey the pitch with cold precision and direct his frontline hitters to cause maximum carnage where it's needed. Should an opposing striker get through his front line the Smitemaster isn't above showing them where he got his name. Such is the Bossman's tactical acumen that he has spent entire games unmoving from his position in the 3 point zone, standing impassively with arms crossed while his front line takes the opposing team apart piece by piece. Fans popularly refer to the W$^3$ 3 point zone as the 'danger zone' due to the seemingly impenetrable fighting aura the Bossman exerts around him.

**Rik and Ruk the Slam Twins**

Rounding out the W$^3$ starting line-up are the irascible twins Rik and Ruk. Garic likes to position these two Jacks on the wings, providing flanking support for the heavier hitters. Forgefather power being what it is

though; these two tireless dynamos have accrued a respectable tally of their own. Their hyperactive personalities have become highly popular endorsements for energy drinks and they famously down a keg of Mig Fizz in the bench before taking to the pitch. Garic's decision to put Rik and Ruk on opposite sides of the pitch isn't just for tactical reasons, the twins tend to go a bit silly when in close proximity to one another and their famous Hyper Scissor Lariat Slam has paralysed more than one opposing player. Their action figures are sold in a twin pack and the authentic lariat action is so effective many children have had to have fingers replaced as a result…▪

*By "left64"*

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